

CITY OF NEWTON

BOARD OF ALDERMEN

TRAFFIC COUNCIL REPORT

THURSDAY, MARCH 20, 2008

Present: David Koses (Chairman) Clint Schuckel (Traffic Engineer) Ald. Danberg, Sergeant Norcross, Rosalie Myers (Clerk)

Other Aldermen Present: Ald. Albright, Ald. Harney, Ald. Hess-Mahan, Ald. Johnson, Ald. Salvucci, Ald. Sangiolo, Ald. Swiston

#TC20-08 ALD. HARNEY on behalf of Tom Koerber and Lasell College requesting
(363-07) parking restrictions on Lake and Myrtle Ave in Auburndale. (Ward 4) [10-23-07
 @07:53 P.M.] **HELD 2/28/08**

ACTION: **APPROVED 4-0.**

NOTE: The Law Department has said that under Massachusetts General Laws, the owners of a private way may remove a parked motor vehicle after certain conditions have been met. Ald. Harney informed the Council that Lasell College and the neighbors reached a consensus and are requesting parking restrictions on the north (College) side of Myrtle Avenue and the west (College) side of Lake Avenue.

The Council voted to approve “no parking” restrictions on the north (Lasell College) side of Myrtle and the west (Lasell College) side of Lake Avenue between Woodland and Myrtle.

#TC5-08 ALD. BURG requesting consideration of traffic calming measures on
(360-06) Derby Street between Cherry Street and Waltham city line. (Ward 3) **HELD**
 1/18/07

ACTION: **APPROVED AS AMENDED 4-0**

NOTE: Traffic Engineer Clint Schuckel addressed the Council. Traffic studies indicate a minimal number of reported crashes at this location. The current speed limit is 25 mph in both directions. There are no parking restrictions west of Pershing Street. Mr. Schuckel suggested continued police enforcement and, in his opinion, this item should be voted no action necessary.

Ald. Sangiolo suggested looking into raised crosswalks.

Richard Shinnick, 286 Derby Street has seen a great deal of speeding on the street. He reported difficulty getting into his own driveway. Amy Murphy of 174 Derby Street also said that cars are speeding. Some of the residents suggested speed bumps, but, it was noted that speed bumps

cannot be considered at this time since city ordinance prohibits them from being installed on nearly every street in Newton, including Derby Street.

Ald. Salvucci noted that speed bumps can be a danger and that the fire, police and traffic engineer sometimes recommend against their installation. Ald. Danberg also noted that speed bumps are difficult for the fire department.

The Council voted a “No Parking” restriction, both sides, on Derby Street between Parmenter and Sheridan, and recommended additional directed patrols on Derby Street close to Waltham city line in the evenings.

#TC18-08 ANNE MARIE DUNNE, 101 Eliot Avenue, West Newton, requesting
(361-07) reduction of posted speed limit as well as discussion of possible ONE-WAY
street on ELIOT AVENUE (Ward 3). [10-16-07 @ 12:26 P.M.]

ACTION: **NAN 4-0**

NOTE: Anne Marie Dunne said that she has lived On Eliot Avenue for 39 years. She feels that there is a safety issue on the street (she noted that there are 25 children under the age of 10), and that cars speed all the time. She would like to see something done to make things safer.

Ms. Desimone of 64 Eliot Avenue said she felt it was a traffic control issue. Mr. O’Brian of 45 Eliot Avenue said that the accident data was not appropriate. Eileen O’Brian said she had an accident that was not insignificant. Steven Krazinski of 36 Eliot Avenue concurred with the speeding problem.

Mr. Schuckel said that the speed limit on the street is 30 mph. The City has previously installed yellow signs that indicate a “recommended” speed limit of 25 mph, although it cannot be enforced. The City would need approval from The Commonwealth of Massachusetts to lower the speed limit from 30 mph. The Engineering Department’s study indicates that the street is 23 ft in width on average. No evidence of speeding or safety problems were observed during the study. About 1,800 vehicles per day drive on Eliot Avenue. During the survey period, 85% of vehicles were traveling 31 mph or less, with 15% exceeding 31 mph. In light of the fact that the 85th percentile speed was observed to be 31 mph, Mr. Schuckel and other members of Traffic Council were confident that the state would not agree to reduce the speed limit below 30 mph. A scarce accident history was also noted. Given the counts observed, a one way is not recommended for Eliot Avenue. It was noted that one-way streets can increase speed

Mr. Schuckel did not see any viable alternatives and felt it was not appropriate to take any action on Eliot Avenue at this time. Other Traffic Council members were concerned that certain actions that were proposed by some residents, such as making Eliot Avenue a one-way street, or closing Eliot Avenue to through-traffic, would simply shift some traffic onto adjacent streets. Installing a series of stop signs along Eliot Avenue may make the street less safe as some motorists would

begin to ignore stop signs when there is a very low traffic volume coming from perpendicular streets.

Ald. Danberg suggested that residents look into the possibility of installing continuous sidewalks along Eliot Avenue.

The Council voted “no action necessary” on this item.

#TC11-08 ALD. LINSKY, JOHNSON, ALBRIGHT, LENNON, SALVUCCI
requesting a discussion relative to changing the traffic flow so that the east end of the Lowell Avenue extension would no longer accommodate two-way through traffic into the intersection of Watertown, Crafts, and Lowell Avenue extension (Ward 2). [8-7-07 @3:12 PM]

#TC23-08 ALD. LINSKY, JOHNSON, ALBRIGHT, LENNON, SALVUCCI, MERRILL AND CICCONE requesting discussion relative to addressing the conditions for vehicular operators and pedestrians, especially relating to lines of sight, on the west edge of the intersection of LOWELL AVENUE and WALNUT STREET (Ward 2). [01-03-08 @ 4:37 p.m.]

ACTION: ITEMS TC11-08 and TC23-08 were HELD FOR 60-DAY TRIAL.

NOTE: These items were held for a 60-day trial as presented by the Traffic Engineer, also to include a parking restriction on the north side of Watertown Street, from Walnut Street to a point 150’ easterly. Ald. Johnson noted that an abutting property owner be asked to trim foliage blocking site lines.

#TC19-08 DAVID KOSES, on behalf of Planning & Development Department
(362-07) requesting study of speed and traffic volumes and recommendations for enhancing pedestrian safety near Angino Farm (Ward 8).

ACTION: NAN 4-0

NOTE: Clint Schuckel noted that parking/pedestrian activity is seasonal; additional parking could be gained on-site; Winchester Street and Nahanton Street are wide enough to have on-street parking, and parking could be restricted on the opposite side of the street to encourage parking adjacent to the property.

Peter Lewenberg of 137 Mary Ellen Road said there is currently a great deal of activity in this area and they are hoping for even more activity. It would be helpful to slow down the traffic in this area.

Ted Chapman of 91 Cornell Street, Vice President of Newton Community Farm, Inc. was also present. He also noted that speed was of great concern in this area.

Clint Schuckel said that some signage could be used at his location. He told the Council that the Public Works Commissioner could sign off on this. It was suggested to have signage reading something like "Farm Ahead".

The Council said the Farm Commission may work with Anne Phelps to create appropriate signage and work with Department of Public Works for installation.

#TC31-08 TRAFFIC ENGINEER requesting that the loading zone near 792 Beacon Street (Pier One Imports) be rescinded and replaced with one-hour meters (Ward 6).

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Ald. Danberg moved that the loading zone near 792 Beacon Street be rescinded and replace it with meters. A meter post will be moved and the two spaces to the left will be restriped.

#TC32-08 TRAFFIC ENGINEER requesting that the three-hour time limit zones on Homer Street near City Hall be rescinded (Ward 6).

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Ald. Danberg moved that the three hour time limit zone on Homer Street be rescinded. Clint Schuckel would like to encourage long term parking on Homer Street.

#TC33-08 TRAFFIC ENGINEER requesting a left-turn only lane for northbound Centre Street at Homer Street (Ward 6).

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0.

NOTE: This item originated with a police request. The street is wide enough to handle this and the "Left Turn Only" lane can be handled by striping.

#TC34-08 TRAFFIC ENGINEER requesting a left-turn only lane for eastbound Washington Street at Concord Street (Ward 4).

ACTION: APPROVED 4-0

NOTE: Ald. Danberg moved that there be a left turn only lane eastbound for Washington Street at Concord Street.

#TC35-08 TRAFFIC ENGINEER requesting that signal controls for the Commonwealth Avenue Carriageway intersections with Chestnut Street and Auburn Street be converted to stop controls (Ward 3,4).

ACTION: Held 4-0 for 60-day trial.

NOTE: Traffic Engineer Schuckel said that his concern was that at these two intersections, the green lights run together for the Carriage road and for Commonwealth Avenue. As the light turns green for the Carriageway, it turns green for the through lane. This can create conflicting movements. Mr. Schuckel suggested a trial to turn off the signal and put in temporary stop signs.

The Council voted for a 60-day trial at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue Carriageway and Chestnut Street to include (1) A sign at the median break on the Carriageway prior to Chestnut Street that indicates that all traffic must turn RIGHT on Chestnut Street; (2) Turn off the traffic signal at the Carriageway that faces the Carriageway, (3) Add a stop sign(s) and a “Right Turn Only” sign on the Carriageway at Chestnut Street; (4) Remove or turn off a portion of the traffic signal on Chestnut Street at the Carriageway that faces northbound Chestnut Street traffic.

This item will be on the May agenda.

The Traffic Council recommended that the Traffic Engineer examine costs associated with creating a separate signal phase for the Carriageway at intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Auburn Street.

Respectfully submitted,

David Koses, Chairman

Traffic Council

Thursday, March 20, 2008

Agenda

- 1. Requesting parking restrictions on Lake Ave and Myrtle Ave
 - # TC17-08 (363-07)
- 2. Requesting Derby Street (Cherry St – City line) traffic calming
 - # TC5-08 (360-06)
- 3. Requesting speed limit reduction and possible one-way street on Eliot Avenue
 - # TC18-08 (361-07)
- 4. Requesting a study in the areas of Lowell Ave/ Watertown St/Crafts St
 - # TC11-08 (258-07)
- 5. Requesting a traffic study at intersection of Lowell Ave/ Walnut Street
 - # TC23-08
- 6. Requesting a study of speed and volume to enhance pedestrian safety near Angino Farm
 - # TC19-08 (362-07)
- 7. Requesting to remove the loading zone at 792 Beacon St and replaced with 1 hr parking
 - # TC31-08
- 8. Requesting to remove 3 hrs parking on Homer Street near City Hall
 - # TC32-08
- 9. Requesting a left-turn only lane for NB Centre Street at Homer Street
 - # TC33-08
- 10. Requesting a left-turn only lane for EB Washington Street at Concord St
 - # TC34-08
- 11. Requesting to switch signal controls to STOP controls on Carriage Rd at Chestnut St and at Auburn St
 - # TC35-08

1. Lake Avenue and Myrtle Avenue parking restrictions

Docket # TC 20-08 (363-07)

Requesting parking restrictions on
Lake Ave and Myrtle Ave

HELD 2/28/08

Myrtle Ave & Lake Ave (private ways)



Myrtle Ave and Lake Ave parking survey

Time & Date	2/8/08 9:00AM	2/11/08 10:00 AM	2/14/08 1:00 PM	2/15/08 11:00AM	2/19/08 2:00PM	2/21/08 12:00AM
Myrtle Ave	5	6	3	4	3	7
Lake Ave	1	0	0	2	0	1

Conclusions

- Both Myrtle Ave and Lake Ave are private roadways
- Parking is restricted both sides on Myrtle Ave 100 feet from Grove St
- Lasell College installed No Parking signs both sides on Lake Ave near Woodland Ave end and on Myrtle Ave between the end of City parking restrictions to Seminary Ave
- Parked cars concentrated on Myrtle Ave near the intersection of Seminary Ave.
- Recommend restricting parking on one side of Myrtle Ave (S) and Lake Ave (E)
- Resident petition required to restrict parking on both sides

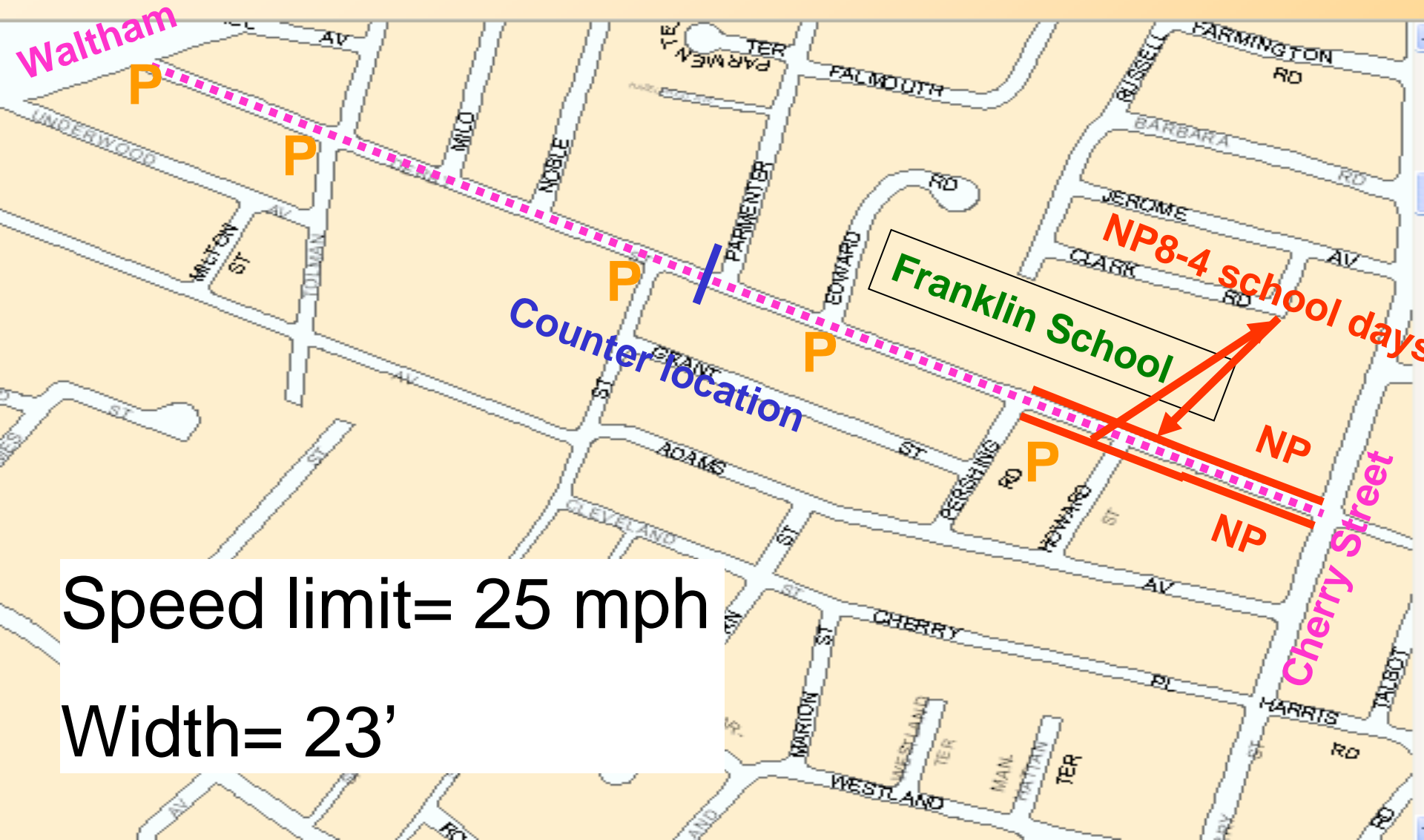
2. Derby Street (Cherry St – City line) traffic calming

Docket # 360-06

Request traffic calming
measurements

HELD 1/18/07

Derby Street (City Line-Cherry St)



Speed limit= 25 mph

Width= 23'

Derby Street EB near City Line



Derby Street EB near Tolman Street



Derby Street EB near Sheridan



Derby Street EB near Edward Rd



Derby Street EB @ School



Latest Traffic Studies (3/12/08 - 3/13/08)

- During weekdays, there are 3,200 vehicles per day on Derby Street, with an even split in each direction
- 85th percentile speed is 32 MPH
- Accident History : 9 accidents in last 5 years (2 at Cherry/Derby)

Conclusions

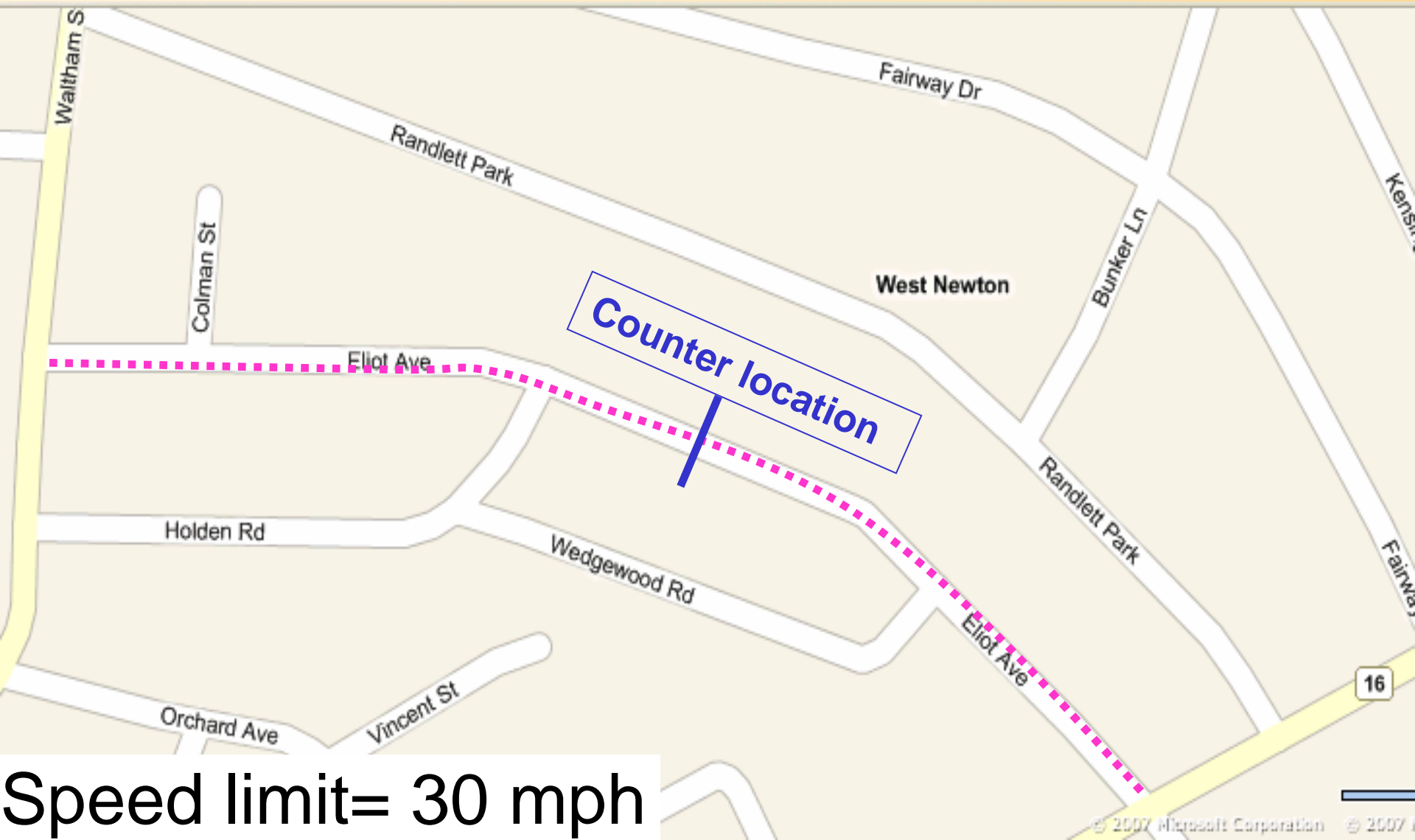
- Street class is minor collector
- Current speed limit is 25 MPH in both directions
- Street is narrow as possible
- No parking restrictions west of Pershing
- School zone needs continued work
- Continued police enforcement
- Add 25 MPH speed limit sign westbound just beyond school
- No Action Necessary

3. Eliot Avenue

Docket # TC 18-08 (361-07)

Requesting to reduce the posted speed limit and discuss possibility of one-way street

Eliot Avenue



Speed limit= 30 mph

Eliot Avenue near Waltham St



Eliot Avenue near Wedgewood Rd



Eliot Avenue near Watertown St



Traffic Studies

(3/12/08 - 3/13/08)

- Street class is local street
- During weekdays, there are 1,800 vehicles per day on Eliot Ave, with an even split in each direction
- 85th percentile speed is 31 MPH
- Accident History: 3 in total in the last 5 years

Conclusions

- The roadway is entirely residential
- No evidence of speeding or safety problem
- Current speed limit is 30 MPH in both directions (advisory 25 MPH signs have been posted on both sides)
- No Action Necessary

4/5. Lowell Ave / Watertown St / Crafts St / Walnut St

Docket # TC11-08 (258-07)

Request a discussion related to traffic
flow on Lowell Ave between Crafts Street
and Walnut Street

HELD 11/15/07



Bacon Rd

16

Rossmore St

Lowell Ave

Watertown St

Prescott St

Walnut St

West Newton

Turner St

Turner Terrace

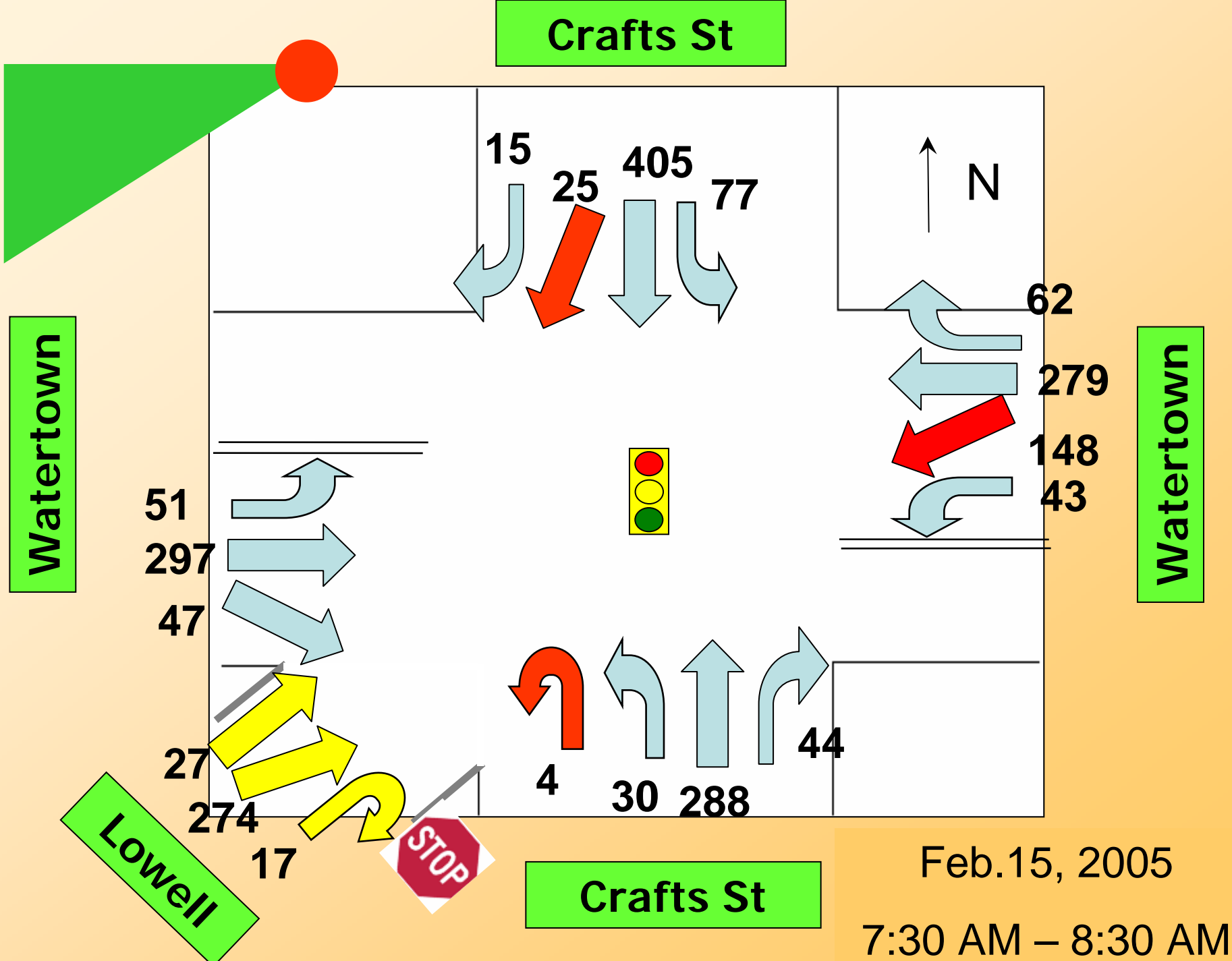
Judkin St



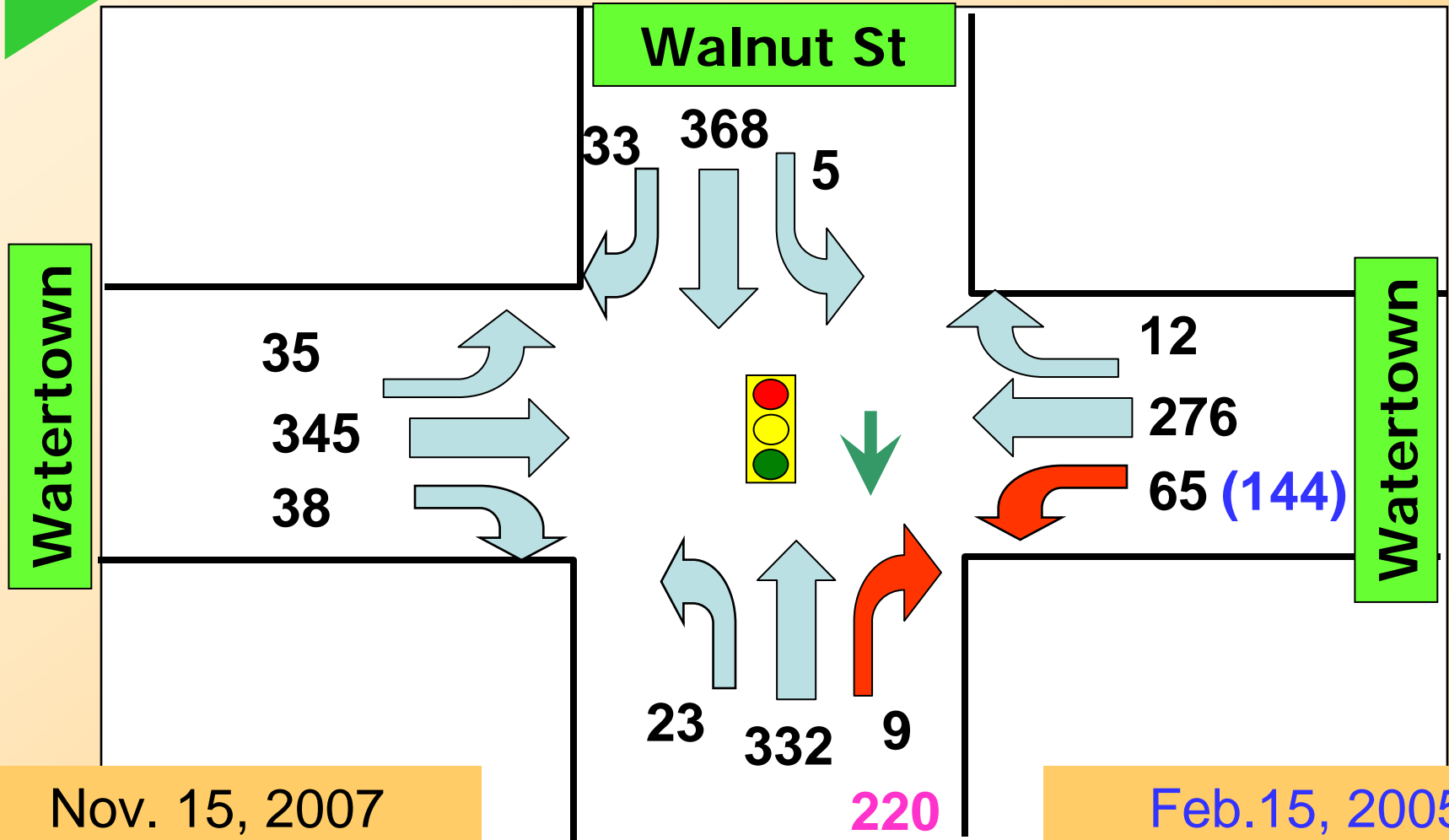
4,500
cars/day

2,300
cars/day

(3/13/08 during trial)



Walnut St/ Watertown St



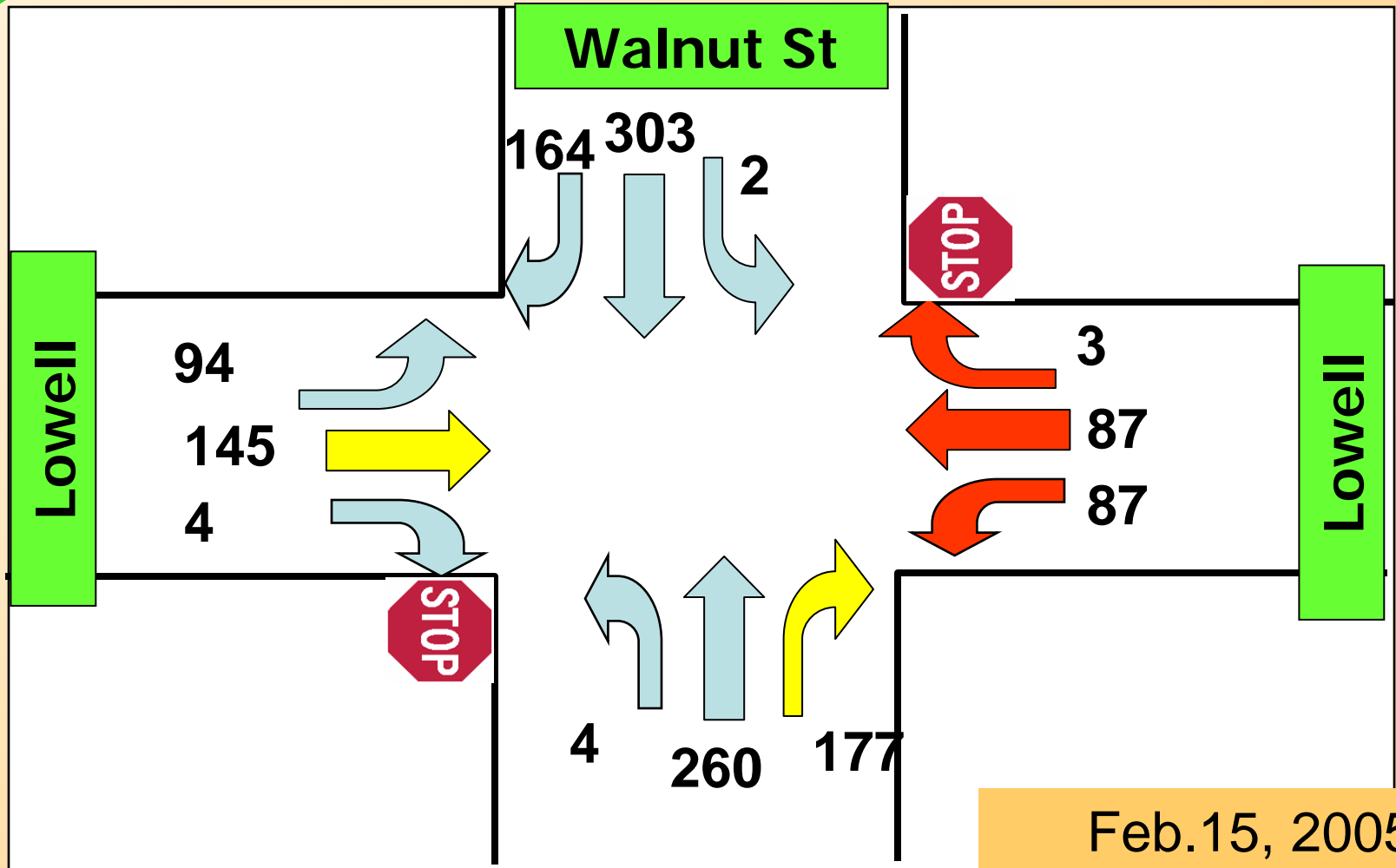
Nov. 15, 2007

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

Feb. 15, 2005

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

Walnut St/ Lowell Ave



Feb.15, 2005

7:30 AM – 8:30 AM

Accident history (1/1/02- 11/8/07)

Location	Number of accidents
Walnut / Watertown	15
Walnut / Lowell	26
Watertown / Crafts	54

Walnut Street at Lowell Ave



Walnut St facing Watertown St



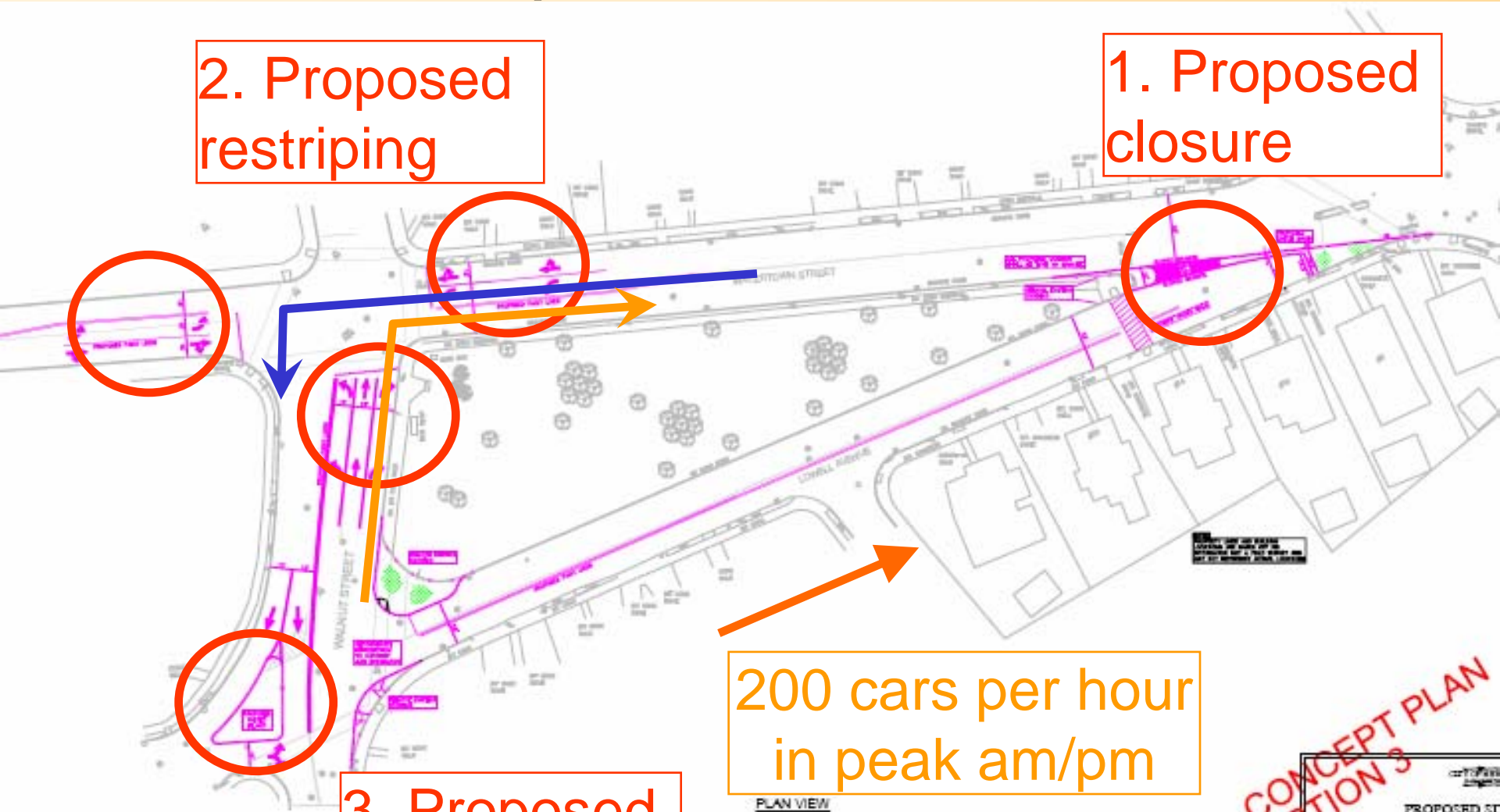
Proposed 2008 Trial

2. Proposed
restriping

1. Proposed
closure

200 cars per hour
in peak am/pm

3. Proposed
island



1. Proposed closure

Sta 4



Fire Engine

Watertown

ALL PROPOSED CURBING
SHALL BE TYPE VA GRANITE

Mountable
Curb

PROPOSED
CATCH BASIN

RESTRIPE CROSS WALK

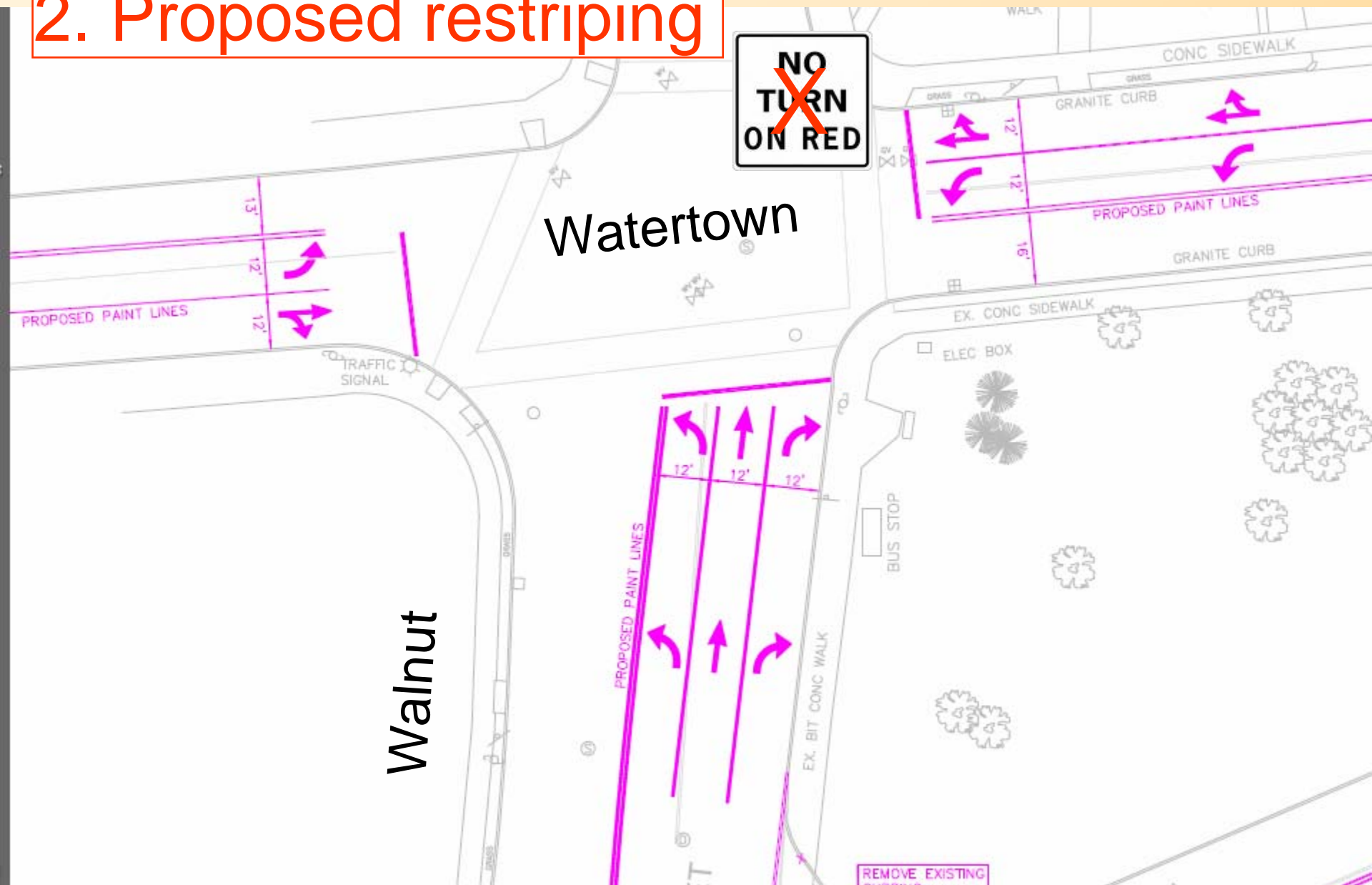
Lowell

14

10

6

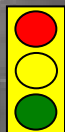
2. Proposed restriping



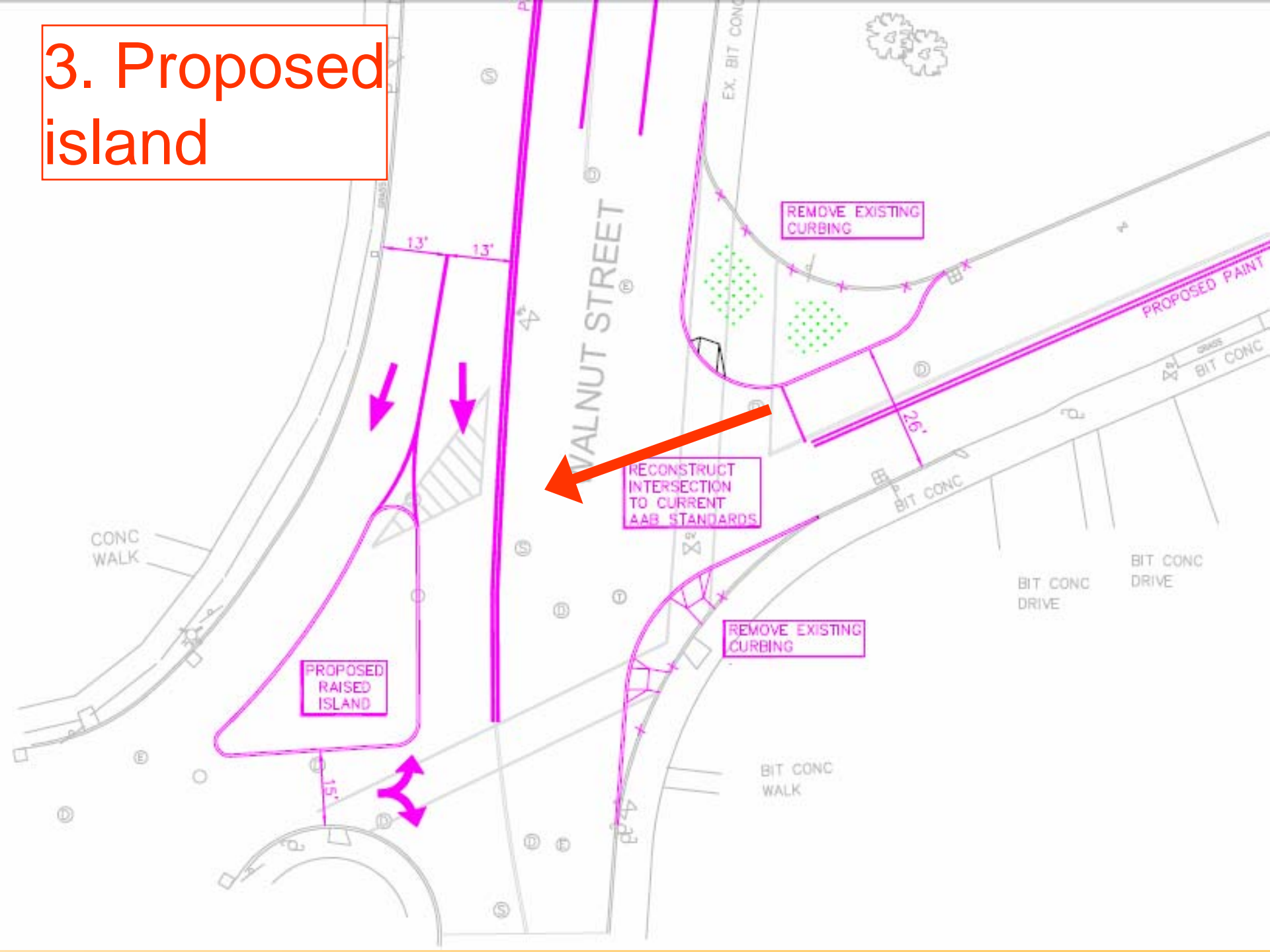


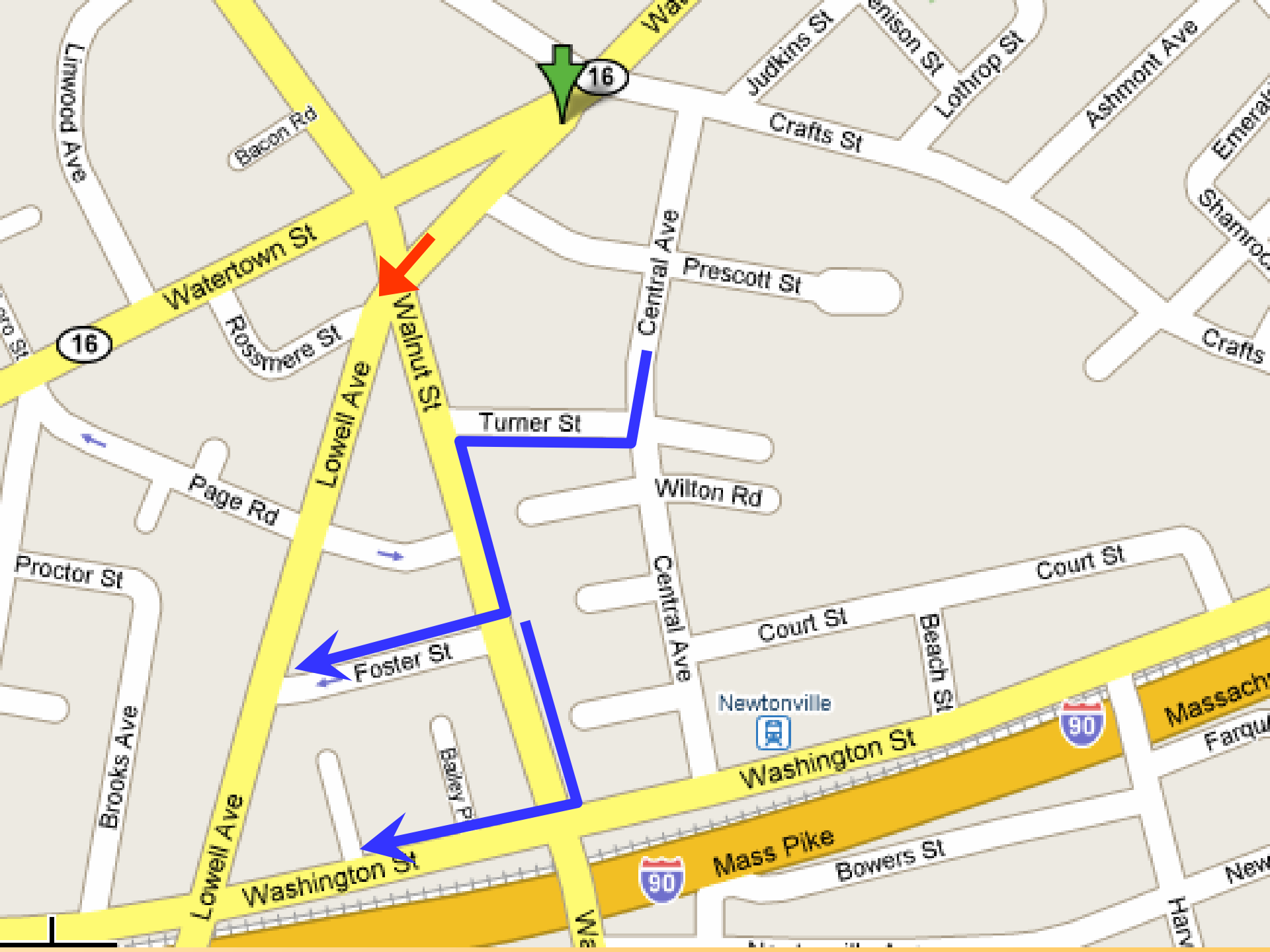
Walnut

Watertown



3. Proposed island





2007 Trial Conclusions

- 2007 Trial began Wed, Oct. 17
- Left-turn arrow on westbound Watertown to southbound Walnut installed ~ Wed, Oct. 24 (~8 seconds green)
- Trial Pros
 - Keeps thru traffic on arterial streets
 - Moves 2 conflict points to signalized intersection
- Trial Cons
 - Egress from # 6, # 10 Lowell Ave difficult
 - Fire Dept use impacted (no signal priority system)
 - Curb is difficult to maneuver for large trucks
 - Creates inconvenience for local traffic
 - Does not address westbound traffic, merge near Crafts

2008 Proposed Trial

- Close northbound Lowell Avenue at Watertown Street
- Create mountable curb for emergency vehicles only
- Restripe Walnut at Watertown with new turn lanes as shown
- Eliminate “No Turn on Red” restriction for northbound Walnut onto eastbound Watertown Street
- Create island and new striping at Lowell/Walnut as shown
- Restripe Walnut at Lowell as shown
- Complete work by mid-April
- Discuss results at May Traffic Council meeting

6. Angino Farm

Docket # TC19-08 (362-07)

Request a speed and volume study to
enhance pedestrian safety

Angino Farm



Angino Farm at Winchester St



Angino Farm driveway on Nahanton Street



Angino Farm driveway on Nahanton St



Intersection of Nahanton/Winchester



Conclusions/Recommendations

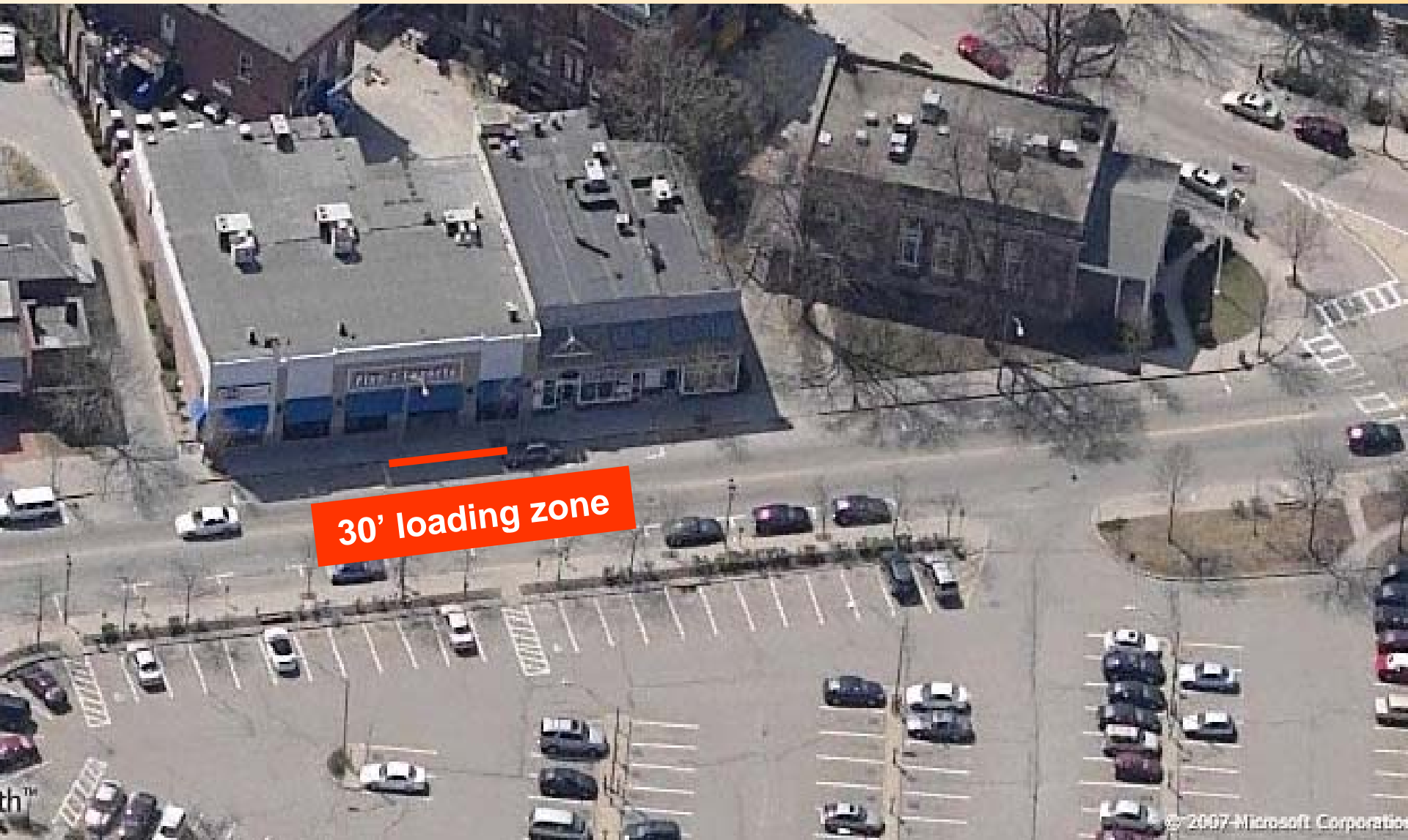
- Parking/pedestrian activity is seasonal
- No data provided on event frequency or parking demand
- Additional parking could be gained on-site
- Winchester St and Nahanton St are wide enough to have on-street parking
- Parking could be restricted on the opposite side of the street to encourage parking adjacent to the property

7. Loading Zone on Beacon St

Docket # TC31-08

Request to remove loading zone near
#792 Beacon Street

#792 Beacon Street



8. Homer Street

Docket # TC32-08

Request to remove 3-hr parking limit on
Homer Street near City Hall

Homer Street at City Hall

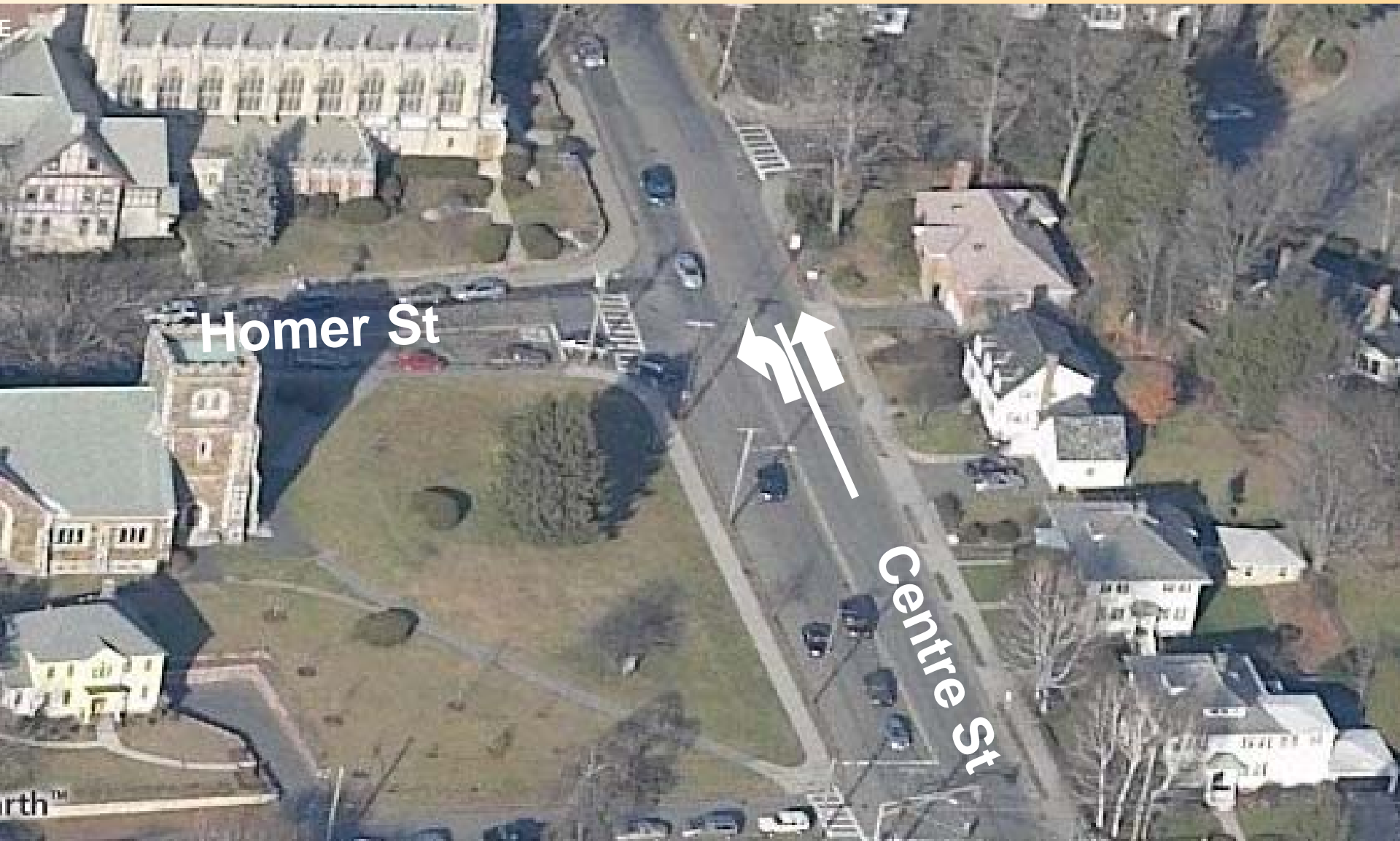


9. Intersection of Centre St and Homer St

Docket # TC33-08

Requesting a left-turn only lane on NB
Centre Street at Homer St

Centre Street at Homer St



10. Intersection of Washington St and Concord St

Docket # TC34-08

Requesting a left-turn only lane on EB
Washington St at Concord St

Washington St at Concord St

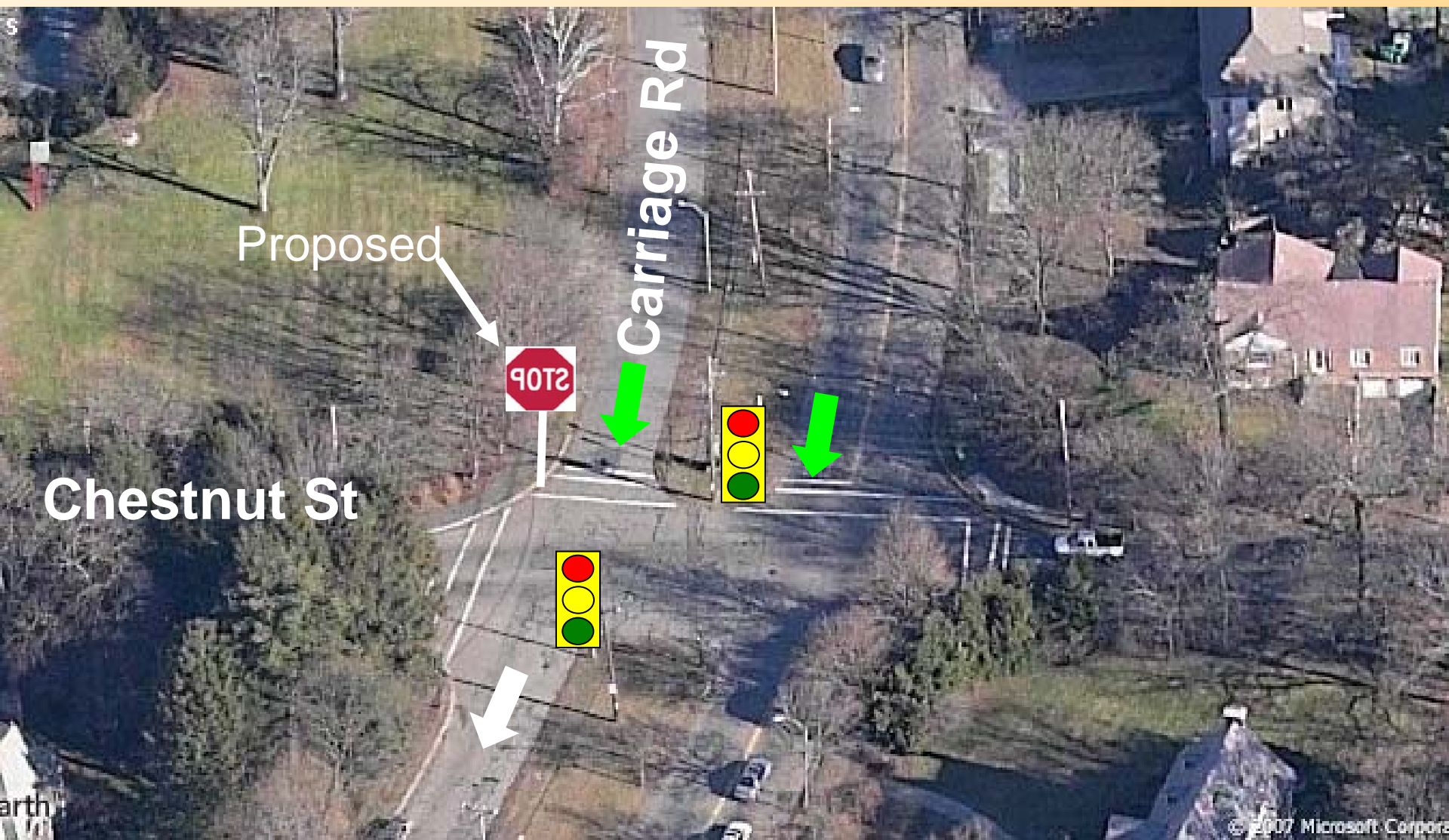


11. Intersection of Carriage Rd at Chestnut St and Auburn St

Docket # TC35-08

Requesting to convert the current
signal controls at the locations to STOP
controls

Comm. Ave/ Chestnut St



Comm. Ave / Auburn St

